

REMARKS

In response to the Examiner's Answer of April 16, 2009, Applicant has canceled the dependent claim 12 and amended the independent claim 1 to more clearly distinguish the claimed invention from the cited references of U.S. Patent No. 4,527,255 ("Keshtbod") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,363,011 ("Hirose et al."). In the Final Office Action of August 4, 2008, claims 1-5 and 7-12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Keshtbod in view of Hirose et al.

As amended, Applicant respectfully asserts that the independent claim 1 is not obvious over Keshtbod in view of Hirose et al., as explained below. In view of the claim amendments and the following remarks, Applicant respectfully requests that the pending claims 1-5 and 7-11 be allowed.

15 I. Patentability of Amended Independent Claim 1

As amended, the independent claim 1 now recites the limitation of "*the sources of the respective transistors being also connected to the sources of the first transistors of the cross-coupled inverters,*" which is not disclosed in the cited references of Keshtbod and Hirose et al. Thus, Applicant respectfully asserts that the amended independent claim 1 is not obvious over Keshtbod in view of Hirose et al. As such, Applicant respectfully requests that the amended independent claim 1 be allowed.

As admitted on page 4 of the Final Office Action, the cited reference of Keshtbod does not disclose a pair of cross-coupled inverters. Thus, Keshtbod does not teach the limitation of "*the sources of the respective transistors being also connected to the sources of the first transistors of the cross-coupled inverters,*" as recited in the amended independent claim 1.

The cited reference of Hirose et al. discloses an nv-latch 4 that includes inverters 45 and 45', as shown in Fig. 5. The inverter 45 includes transistors 31 and 32, while the inverter includes transistors 31' and 32'. However, the sources of the transistors 32 and 32' are not connected to the sources of any other transistors. Thus,

Hirose et al. also does not teach the limitation of “*the sources of the respective transistors being also connected to the sources of the first transistors of the cross-coupled inverters*,” as recited in the amended independent claim 1.

5 Since both Keshtbod and Hirose et al. fail to teach the above-noted claim limitation, the amended independent claim 1 is not obvious over Keshtbod in view of Hirose et al. As such, Applicant respectfully requests that the amended independent claim 1 be allowed.

10 II. Patentability of Dependent Claims 2-5 and 7-11

15 Each of the dependent claims 2-5 and 7-12 depends on the amended independent claim 1. As such, these dependent claims include all the limitations of the amended independent claim 1. Therefore, Applicant submits that these dependent claims are allowable for at least the same reasons as the amended independent claim 1.

20 Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the claims in view of the remarks made herein. A notice of allowance is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,
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